

Message Text

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17
ACTION EA-09

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-02 INR-07 L-03

NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06 IO-13

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P R 170345Z SEP 76
FM AMEMBASSY PORT MORESBY
TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 1798
INFO AMEMBASSY CANBERRA
AMEMBASSY MANILA
AMEMBASSY SUVA
AMEMBASSY WELLINGTON
CINCPAC HONOLULU

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE PORT MORESBY 1003

CINCPAC FOR POLAD

E.O. 11652: NA
TAGS: PGOV PINT PP
SUBJ: ASSESSMENT OF BOUGAINVILLE PNG SETTLEMENT

REF: PORT MORESBY 085, PORT MORESBY A-47, A-48 AND A-49

1. POLOFF VISITED BOUGAINVILLE FROM AUGUST 29 THROUGH
SEPT. 2 AND HELD LENGTHY AND CORDIAL DISCUSSIONS WITH
PROVINCIAL GOVERNMENT LEADERS INCLUDING DR. ALEXIS SAREI
(PREMIER) AND LEO HANNETT (PROVINCIAL SECRETARY).
NUMEROUS DISCUSSIONS ALSO HELD WITH LEADERS
CONVERSANT WITH ISSUES. DETAILED ASSESSMENTS CONTAINED
REFAIRS.

2. OUR OVERALL ASSESSMENT IS THAT SETTLEMENT PACKAGE
OFFERS BOUGAINVILLE THE CONTROL IT DESIRES WITHIN
CONTEXT UNITED PAPUA NEW GUINEA. BOUGAINVILLE LEADERS
BELIEVE PACKAGE MEETS THEIR NEEDS, AND IF AGREEMENT IS
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IMPLEMENTED, NO NEED FOR SECESSION EXISTS. IF

AGREEMENT IS NOT IMPLEMENTED BY GPNG THEY WILL ONCE AGAIN MOVE TOWARD SECESSION. THERE ARE STRONG INDICATIONS, HOWEVER, THAT BOUGAINVILLE BELIEVES PACKAGE WILL BE HONORED BY GPNG, AND THAT BOUGAINVILLE SEES MAJOR ROLE FOR ITSELF IN NATIONAL POLITICAL FORUM WITHIN CONTEXT OF UNITED PNG FOLLOWING MID-1977 NATIONAL ELECTIONS. PNG LEADERS AT HIGHEST LEVEL HAVE ACCEPTED THESIS THAT BOUGAINVILLE IS SPECIAL CASE AND WARRANTS CONSIDERABLE LOCAL AUTONOMY. THERE IS SOME INDICATION HOWEVER THAT ELEMENTS OF PNG BUREAUCRACY ARE STILL HOSTILE TO SETTLEMENG AND COULD BE SLUGGISH OR WORSE IN THE IMPLEMENTATION OF IT. STILL THE INTENTIONS OF BOTH PARTIES TO HOLD TO THE AGREEMENT MAY BE CHARACTERIZED AS GOOD.

3. THE AGREEMENT, HOWEVER, IS EXTREMELY COMPLEX AND WILL BE INORDINATELY DIFFICULT TO IMPLEMENT. BURDEN TO IMPLEMENT RESTS PRIMARILY ON THE NATIONAL GOVERNMENT WHICH MAY NOT HAVE CAPABILITY TO DO SO IN RAPID AND EFFICIENT FASHION. KEY ELEMENT IN SATISFYING BOUGAINVILLIANS WILL BE PROVISION BY GPNG OF SUFFICIENT FUNDS AND PERSONNEL TO MOUNT TRULY EFFECTIVE WORKS PROJECT IN PROVINCE AND TO ESTABLISH PROVINCIAL ADMINISTRATION. IF FUNDING OF THESE AND RELATED PROGRAMS IS EFFECTIVE, PROVINCE WILL SEE IT AS INDICATION OF GOOD FAITH. IF PROGRAMS FLOUNDER PEOPLE WILL BECOME RAPIDLY DISILLUSIONED AND PRESSURE WILL ONCE AGAIN FORCE BOUGAINVILLE LEADERSHIP TOWARD SECESSION.

4. EVEN WITH BEST OF INTENTIONS ON BOTH SIDES WE MAY ANTICIPATE THAT AGREEMENT WILL HAVE "UPS AND DOWNS" AS WE MOVE TOWARD THE END OF THE YEAR WHEN MAJOR ASPECTS OF THE PROGRAM ARE SCHEDULED TO BE IMPLEMENTED. THERE MAY BE CONSIDERABLE ACRIMONY REFLECTED IN THE MEDIA. THIS NEED NOT MEAN THAT AGREEMENT HAS FAILED AND MAY ONLY REFLECT THE MESSY AND EXTREMELY NOISY MANNER IN WHICH THE DIALOGUE BETWEEN BOUGAINVILLE AND THE NATIONAL GOVERNMENT HAS TRADITIONALLY BEEN CARRIED OUT.
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